

Skin Cancer Facts

Stephanie Drum, BSN, RN

The FACTS:

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. The most common types of skin cancer include basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Anyone can get skin cancer, but certain people are at greater risk.

***Indicators** include irregular borders on moles, moles that are not symmetrical (1/2 doesn't match the other half)

*Moles bigger than a pencil eraser

*Itchy, painful moles

*Sores that bleed and do not heal

*Red patches or lumps

*Lighter natural skin color

*Skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily

*Blue or green eyes

*Blond or red hair

*Family or personal history of skin cancer

*Chronic non-healing wounds or burns

Protect Yourself...

*Use broad spectrum sunscreen with at least an SPF of 15 even on cloudy or cool days on all exposed skin.

*Sunscreen works by absorbing, reflecting, or scattering sunlight. The chemicals interact with the skin to protect it from UV rays. If you react to a sunscreen speak with your provider.

*SPF means a person can stay in the sun 15-times longer before burning and only refers to UVB protection (the rays that contribute to sunburn and/or skin cancer).

*For UVA protection, look for products containing: Mexoryl, Parsol 1789, Titanium dioxide, Zinc oxide, or Avobenzone.

*Sunscreen performance is affected by wind, humidity, perspiration, and proper application.

*Apply liberally (1 oz. min./shot glass) at least 20 minutes before sun exposure.

*It does wear off, so put it on again if you stay out in the sun for more than 2 hours post swimming, sweating or toweling off.

*Check the expiration date. Shelf life is typically 2-3 years, however, if it has been exposed to extreme temperatures or has a strange odor, then discard it.

*Apply to ears, scalp, lips, neck, tops of feet, and backs of hands.

*Wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses, UV protection clothing, sunscreen.

*Pay attention to the UV index for the day.



0-2=Low 3-7 Moderate to High 8+ is High to Extreme

*Short shadow- SEEK SHADE

*Take breaks in the shade and drink plenty of water.

*Sunscreens with really high SPFs, such as SPF 75 or SPF 100, do not offer any more protection than SPF 30.

*Keep it simple, use it generously and properly... it is not intended to be like a magic force-field, you must use it correctly. Go with the dermatologist recommendations.....SPF 15 or SPF 30, reapply often, and place before going outside.

Sources:

[Cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

[Skincancer.org](https://www.skincancer.org)

[Skincancerfoundation.org](https://www.skincancerfoundation.org)

<https://www.epa.gov/sunsafety/uv-index-scale-0>